

ECA Highlights Report

July 16, 2004

ECA Weekly Highlights are organized by the Bureau's response to the Department's Strategic Objectives and by three themes: *ECA Outreach Worldwide*; *Partnerships for Learning: Working Together for the Successor Generation*; and *Program Alumni Magnifying U.S. Public Diplomacy*. The regional breakdown of highlights presented in this report is as follows:

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I. ECA Outreach Worldwide

Strategic Objective: PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

SECRETARY POWELL UNVEILS TRAVELING MARSHALL PLAN EXHIBIT, CITES ACHIEVEMENTS OF ECA EXCHANGES

At a July 13 reception organized by ECA Deputy Assistant Secretary **Thomas Farrell**, Secretary of State **Colin L. Powell** opened the traveling version of the exhibit "The Marshall Plan: The Vision of a Family of Nations" that will be made available to universities and other venues in the United States through the Department's Bureau of Public Affairs and the U.S. Diplomacy Center. Speakers at the ceremony also included Assistant Secretary of State **Patricia Harrison**, French Ambassador **Jean-David Levitte**, and General **Edward Meyer** of the Marshall Foundation. In his remarks, Secretary Powell highlighted ECA as "perhaps one of the most important bureaus that we have in the Department" for managing the exchanges that "represent partnerships between the United States and the countries around the world..."

(For full remarks, see <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/34374.htm>.)

U.S. CHOREOGRAPHER BUILDS BRIDGES IN BELARUS

Accomplished dancer **Neta Pulvermacher** visited Belarus in mid-June to work with dancers from the Belarusian State University of Culture and the Youth Variety Theater. In a 20-minute segment on Belarusian state TV's "Good Morning Belarus," Pulvermacher spoke about the effect dance can have in bridging United State-Belarus bilateral relations, expressing her appreciation to the U.S. Department of State for making the program a reality. These public expressions of thanks to the U.S. government are extremely important notes U.S. embassy Minsk, and the Ambassador wishes to hold a follow-up program as quickly as possible.

Strategic Objective: ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL INTERESTS

ECA LAUNCHES PROGRAM, FIRST CITIZEN DIPLOMAT VISITS NIGERIA

ECA launched its ECA Citizen Diplomat Program, established by Office of International Visitors Director **Charles Moore**, to engage American citizens who are committed to building meaningful connections with people around the world by creating opportunities in host countries for dialogue and the exchange of ideas. The program will draw from the vast resources of the International Visitor Leadership Program's network of Councils for International Visitors and from other exchange participants.

Pediatric ophthalmologist Dr. **Trudi Grin** of Kansas City, Missouri, traveled to Abuja and Lagos, Nigeria, July 4 to 10, as the first Citizen Diplomat. Dr. Grin is the President of Medical Missions Foundation, which provides medical care, surgery, and supplies to needy patients in developing nations, focusing particularly on children with birth defects. In Nigeria, she delivered a presentation on "Volunteerism and Community Action" to the members of the Nigerian International Visitor alumni association and conducted the workshop "Making NGOs Sustainable." Throughout her visit Dr. Grin met with officials of the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Health and medical professionals. Approximately 100 physicians, consultants, and hospital administrators welcomed her to the National Eye Hospital in Kaduna, where she donated medical supplies valued at \$5000. Hundreds of Nigerians from university associations, Humphrey fellowship alumni, and senior administrators of the National Volunteer Services attended her events, which also attracted widespread broadcast and print media coverage. Dr. Grin has

regularly met with International Visitors who come to the United States. Her *reverse* program exemplified the mutuality of the International Visitor Leadership Program experience.

JORDAN CENTER SUPPORTS IRAQI CULTURAL PRESERVATION EFFORTS

Following up on the leading role of the ECA-funded American Center of Oriental Research (ACOR) in the ECA Cultural Heritage Institute for 20 Iraqi museum specialists earlier this year, ACOR Director Dr. **Pierre Bikai** spoke to the Iraq Heritage Congress about the Center's work on the Petra Church. The Congress, co-sponsored by the Global Heritage Fund and the World Bank, was a dedicated workshop for Iraqi archaeological site managers, regional inspectors and on-site and museum conservators who focused on site management planning and conservation science to assist in the protection and conservation of Iraq's archaeological heritage.

DIVERSITY, COMMITMENT TO OUTREACH STRENGTHENED WITH NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF FULBRIGHT FOUNDATION IN INDIA

U.S. Education Foundation in India (USEFI) Executive Director **Jane Schukoske** and the Fulbright staff welcomed Dr. **Jamshed Ahmed Siddiqui** as the new Deputy Director, July 15 at Fulbright House. Dr. Siddiqui came to USEFI from his position as Executive Director of the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce. Previously, he had worked with the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, New Delhi, and with the Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council, Ministry of Information Technology, Government of India. As USEFI Deputy Director, Dr. Siddiqui supervises the operations of the Indian and American Program Sections, Educational Advising Services and Administration.

FULBRIGHTERS FOCUS ON “DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND ACCOUNTABILITY” AT ENHANCEMENT SEMINAR IN PANAMA

PAS Panama hosted the U.S. Fulbright Student Enhancement Seminar on June 8 where fourteen U.S. students enjoyed the opportunity to meet with their counterparts from the region as well as members of the Fulbright Alumni Association. **Fernando Berguido**, president of the Panama chapter of Transparency International, gave a lecture on “Democracy, Human Rights, and Accountability” and engaged the students in a discussion.

GROW PROJECT UNITES WOMEN, WINS PRAISE OF SRI LANKAN PRIME MINISTER

Northern Illinois University's two-year Citizen Exchange grant, GROW, which worked with Sri Lankan NGOs on women's grassroots development and leadership training, culminated on June 8 with a symposium, convening previously disparate Sri Lankan women's organizations. Sri Lankan Prime Minister **Mahinda Rajapakse**, the Minister of Women's Empowerment, the Provost of NIU, and numerous civic leaders praised the achievements of the program. Women who received training have since become village leaders, initiating local projects to improve their communities. Rajapakse called for Sri Lanka's leaders to allot 33 percent of seats in Parliament to women and advocated an extensive training program for the participating NGOs.

FULBRIGHT ALUMNI HAVE FOLLOW-UP SEMINAR IN COSTA RICA

Thirty-seven Fulbright alumni from 17 countries in the Western Hemisphere participated in a seminar, June 20-27, at the Central American Institute of Business Administration in Alajuela, Costa Rica. The seminar served as a supplement to their earlier Fulbright Amazon Basin and Central American Ecology Programs and provided practical training in leadership, negotiation and development project assessment to prepare them to carry out professional responsibilities.

The grantees are officers of international NGOs, university professors, consultants to public and private development authorities, international liaisons, and community educators.

AMERICAN CULTURAL SPECIALIST IS CATALYST FOR OMANI CULTURAL HERITAGE PROTECTION

American Cultural Specialist **John Coppola**, former exhibition director at the Smithsonian Institution, conducted a well-attended and highly regarded series of workshops, public lectures, and museum consultations in Muscat, Oman, June 5 – 18. Coppola’s visit was a catalyst for cooperation and discussion within Oman’s cultural establishment and reinforced America’s support for the protection of heritage and culture in the Islamic-Arab world. His presence attracted significant and unusual print media coverage. The government Arabic daily *Oman* (June 11, 2004) devoted a quarter-page article to Coppola’s activities.

THAI EXPERTS DEVELOP CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS

Through an ECA-sponsored program conducted by the University of Missouri, fifteen Thai conflict resolution experts visited the United States, June 5-18, to develop skills for peaceful resolution of ethnic, cultural, and religious differences in their communities. The participants, all village headmen from central and northern Thailand, learned about the role of religion in secular society and engaged with numerous Missourian minorities and ethnic groups including Germans, Hispanics, Vietnamese, Bosnians, and Somalis. The Thais were especially impressed by the “Peace Patrol” at an ethnically diverse elementary school in St. Louis, where fifth graders and a counselor used conflict resolution techniques on the school playground.

II. Partnerships for Learning: Working Together for the Successor Generation

Strategic Objective: PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

CULTURAL AMBASSADOR YO-YO MA CAPTIVATES KOREAN YOUTH

Under the auspices of ECA’s CultureConnect program, world-renowned cellist and Cultural Ambassador **Yo-Yo Ma** held 160 young Korean students in rapt attention at the Korean National University of Arts in Seoul. During his three-hour Master Class for aspiring musicians from leading universities and arts high schools on June 24, students were mesmerized by his technical mastery and innovative ideas about music and life. The students especially appreciated his advice on ways to better communicate with other players and the audience. A violin student later noted that she was impressed by the maestro’s audience-friendly manner, as well as his teaching skills and passion for music. The maestro also played short pieces with his Silk Road Ensemble for the students, explaining the importance of the interactive nature of music across different cultures and the interdependence between different peoples. As a result of this CultureConnect program, Seoul Arts School, Korea’s top arts secondary school, has requested that Yo-Yo Ma return for a second master class aimed at teenage music students, and Master Class participants requested that the U.S. Embassy sponsor an encore.



ECA CultureConnect Ambassador Yo-Yo Ma engages and captivates young students at the Korean National University of Arts, June 24, 2004.

JAZZ AMBASSADORS CONNECT WITH RUSSIAN AUDIENCES



Students in Perm, Russia, work on drumming techniques with members of the Jazz Ambassadors-Kelly Johnson Quartet.

The **Kelly Johnson Quartet**, ECA Jazz Ambassadors, performed in Perm, Russia, for the U.S. Consulate General's official Independence Day celebration. The memorable concert lasted over two hours, as the artists spontaneously invited on stage jazz students with whom they held master class earlier that day. The band not only demonstrated exceptional playing techniques, but also inspired the young jazz musicians to greater creativity. The outdoor public venue allowed for a great deal of media coverage, which helped highlight the U.S. Consulate General's highest priority: the promotion of multicultural tolerance and understanding. The evening also featured the opening of a photo exhibit chronicling the history of meetings between U.S. and Russian-Soviet Presidents, and a traditional 4th of July picnic complete with American-style hot dogs, popcorn, and ice cream. As Perm's acting Governor noted, "Fifteen years ago an event such as this would have been unimaginable." The celebration embodied the progress of U.S.-Russian relations.

GRADUATE SCHOOL INFORMATION SESSION DRAWS DROVES OF BANGLADESHI STUDENTS

On June 15, Dhaka's ECA-supported Student Advising Center reached out to nearly 300 students at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology. Student Advisor **Arefin Jahan** provided in-depth information on U.S. graduate studies: informational sources, application requirements, how to select an institution, types of financial aid available for international graduate students and the services provided by the American Center. Discussion covered the university environment, faculty expectations, and the importance of thorough preparation for graduate study.



Student Advisors (at left) from the ECA-supported Student Advising Center in Dhaka speak with students at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology.

Strategic Objective: ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL INTERESTS

TECHNOLOGY PROVES ITSELF AT INNOVATIVE SUMMER CAMP IN RUSSIA

On July 9, seventy secondary school students from a bilingual Bashkir-Russian high school in Ufa, received certificates for their attendance at a three-week innovative summer camp where they learned about American culture and the English language while developing their leadership skills. The teachers and counselors, all alumni of ECA exchange programs, also provided 105 hours of instruction focusing on how to use the Internet to gain knowledge in these areas. The highlight of the camp was a digital videoconference on July 8 between the students and Assistant Secretary of State **Patricia Harrison** that provided for "face-to-face" discussion of the students' impressions and opinions. Emphasizing the value of exchanges and leadership skills, Harrison provided the students with inspiration and confidence to continue their studies of English and



American Studies. Press coverage included television broadcasts on “All Ufa” and the regional “Vesti” channel, as well as newspaper coverage in numerous daily papers.

Secondary school students in Ufa, Russia, discuss their experience in an American culture and English language camp with Assistant Secretary Patricia Harrison via digital videoconference, July 8, 2004.

III. Program Alumni Magnifying U.S. Public Diplomacy

Strategic Objective: ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL INTERESTS

INTERNATIONAL VISITOR’S EXPERIENCE HAS POSITIVE IMPACT ON SAMOAN TELEVISION INDUSTRY

Following his multi-regional IV project on TV broadcasting, **Etie Tualapini**, Program Manager of the Samoa Broadcasting Corporation’s television station, has coordinated efforts to improve Samoan broadcasting. The program deepened his commitment to press freedom and free market media and heightened his interest in acquiring U.S. equipment and programming. As a result of contacts he established during his visit, Tualapini plans to reinvigorate the Samoan Broadcasting Corporation station with programming from the History and Discovery channels, to consult a U.S. architect for ideas regarding construction of a new studio, and to send his staff for media training at Miami-Dade Community College.

IV LEADERSHIP PROGRAM ALUMNA PRODUCES ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN MANUAL FOR PALESTINIAN WOMEN

Nibal Thawabteh, one of five Palestinian women participants in the special 2002 Middle East Peace Initiative (MEPI)-funded International Visitor program “Women as Political Leaders,” recently published a training manual for women planning to run in elections. Thawabteh, who is regarded as one of the West Bank’s best experts on women and elections, told the Public Affairs Section in Jerusalem that compiling the manual would not have been possible without her training in the United States. With many women considering running for office in the upcoming Palestinian municipal elections, the well-timed manual will draw a large readership.

IV ALUMNI IN GUATEMALA DEMONSTRATE LEADERSHIP

The PAO in Guatemala honored alumni of the IV Leadership Program at a recent dinner, congratulating them for their leadership in advancing Guatemala’s future. The alumni acknowledged the program for showing them the diversity in America and increasing their understanding of the United States. Following their visit to the United States, many of the alumni have attained high-level positions including Sub-Secretary of Public Relations for the Presidency, chief of the economic section for Guatemala’s most widely viewed TV news station, and director of *Fondo de Desarrollo Indigena Guatemateco*, a government agency focused on

creating opportunities for indigenous people. In addition, an economics reporter has won three grand prizes this year, including one in a region-wide competition.

CITIZEN EXCHANGE PROGRAM ALUMNA CREATES DISPUTE RESOLUTION COURSE IN DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

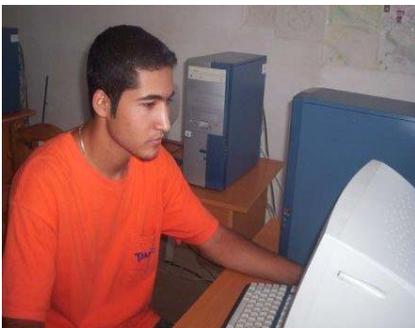
The Dominican Republic's most prestigious NGO, The Foundation for Justice and Institution Building, recently announced the inauguration of the Dominican Republic's first formal course on alternative dispute resolution techniques. The director of this new course was a key participant in the 1998-2001 ECA Citizens Exchange program with the Tulane/Loyola Public Law Center, wherein members of the Dominican bar learned the techniques and advantages of alternative dispute resolution. Other participants in this exchange, along with a former Fulbright grantee, will teach the course. American investors have long seen the establishment of alternative dispute resolution in the Dominican Republic as a requirement for increasing their engagement with this island nation.

AZERI FLEX ALUMNUS ATTRIBUTES ACHIEVEMENTS TO CIVIC ED WORKSHOP

FLEX alumnus **Elgar Baghirov**, a student at the Academy of Public Administration in Baku, Azerbaijan, has been elected class president, Editor-in-Chief of the Faculty Newspaper, and a member of the Bureau of the Student Science Association. He also won a contest in May that will enable him to participate in a United Nations Internship program. Baghirov spent the 2002-03 academic year as a FLEX student in Newman Lake, Washington and credits his participation in the FLEX Civic Education Workshop and his exchange experience in general with helping him to attain these achievements. He said, "The week in Washington, DC helped me to become a better person and to be successful in my life...I want to thank you again for giving [me] such a chance!"

UZBEK FLEX ALUMNUS TEACHES PEERS ABOUT THE UNITED STATES

From July 5-7, recent FLEX participant **Aziz Baratov** conducted two sessions at the School Connectivity Educational Internet Center in Uzbekistan. More than twenty tenth-grade students from Karshi School No. 34, as well students from the Karshi Boarding School, took part in Baratov's trainings on "Schools of the United States" and "Possibilities to Study in the US." After describing differences between U.S. and Uzbek schools, Baratov demonstrated program websites that are resources for students interested in studying in the United States. Baratov, who was named an official 'technical volunteer' of the School Connectivity Center, said, "With pleasure, I will help advise everyone who is trying to study and learn at a high level."



FLEX alumnus Aziz Baratov conducts a session at the School Connectivity Educational Internet Center in Uzbekistan.